

HOUSE CALL

intercommunity hospital

Vol. 2, No. 3

Intercommunity Hospital

September, 1977

I.H.: Base for Paramedics



Welcome Set For Program

They'll come by motorcade -- the Vacaville paramedics, Fire Chief Howard Wood and that city's five council members will be officially welcomed to the paramedic base hospital on September 12.

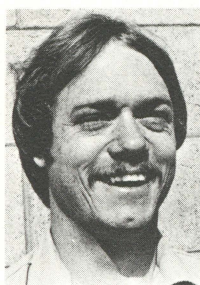
Administrator John Thompson and Vacaville physician and Chief of Staff Dr. Ronald Rushford will welcome and introduce the honored guests as they arrive at the Outpatient Entrance at 9 a.m.

Members of the Fairfield City Council, the Solano Board of Supervisors the Vacaville Chamber of Commerce Paramedic Committee and the hard working members of the county's Paramedic Subcommittee will be invited to help welcome our guests of honor.

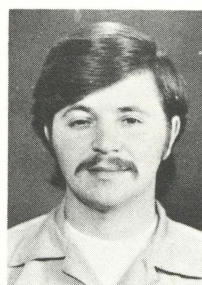
Guests will include Vacaville Mayor Barbara Jones, former mayor Bill Carroll, a prime mover behind the paramedic effort, and council members Carolyn Van Loo, Berton Hassing, Etheal Gilley, and *Vacaville Reporter* publisher Richard Rico.

Paramedic equipment installed in Intercommunity's Emergency Department and in the Vacaville ambulance will be on display as tours are conducted through the Emergency Area.

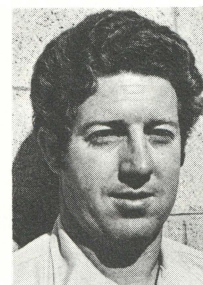
Coffee, donuts and juices will be served to guests in the Conference Rooms.



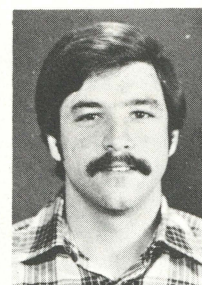
GANTT



RAMOS



NORMAN



LOPEZ

When an eight-ton sheet of steel smashed into the back of a U.S. Steel worker in San Francisco recently, Vacaville paramedics-in-training Gene Gantt and Tony Ramos were on the scene in minutes.

They contacted the base hospital physicians, started IV's, transported the victim to the hospital and followed his progress through surgery to remove his ruptured spleen.

"The steel worker took nine units of blood, but he came out okay," said Gantt, one of Vacaville's new team of firemen-paramedics.

Back in Vacaville after 16 week's extensive training, Gantt will help launch that city's new paramedic program for which Intercommunity will serve as the base hospital.

The faces of Gantt and fellow firemen-paramedics Lynn Norman, Tony Ramos and Brian Lopez are familiar ones in the Intercommunity Emergency Department. They have spent recent weeks there familiarizing themselves with the department's operations.

The extensive training begins with six weeks in the classroom at Stanford University where the young men learned as much about the needed medical procedures, equipment and

drugs as could be squeezed from professors and textbooks. The program involved as much as four lectures, 30 pages of notes and one exam a day.

Each trainee then spent a month learning clinical procedures on-site. At the training hospital, Gantt worked in the emergency room, intensive care, operating rooms, in respiratory

"We Are The Eyes And Hands of The Doctor"

therapy, the lab and the delivery room, where he watched three births.

Then six weeks of field work began with Bay Area paramedic units in South San Francisco and Palo Alto.

"We rode on as many as 12 paramedic calls a day," said Norman. One involved a boy who had been sitting in a park when a flying skateboard hit him in the head. On another call it took nine men to pull a dying driver from behind the wheel of a truck. Treating him for cardiac arrest and massive internal injuries had to

(Continued on page 8)

COMMENTARY

Start Those Letters Comin'

No news may be good news, but an empty mail bag is as dull as a rainy day in mid-winter. *House Call* would like to hear from you, like we recently heard from Katherine and Robert Evans of Fairfield.

"My husband had major surgery about two months ago," Mrs. Evans wrote in July. "We would like to take this opportunity to extend a special thank you for the care he received. The nursing staff gave him excellent care and Doctor Mahaffey, who was his doctor, was outstanding."

Now, that's a letter to start your heart in the morning and put a little sparkle in the eye.

We don't expect all kudos about hospital staff and service or even about the *House Call*. We'd like to hear your reservations as well. We want to know what you -- the staff, visitors, foundation members and patients -- are thinking, feeling and experiencing at our hospital.

Address your letters to *House Call*, Intercommunity Hospital, 1800 Pennsylvania Ave., Fairfield, 94533.

Oh, and thank YOU, Katherine and Robert Evans.

Our Employees Rate As VIE's

Are you a Very Important Employee? Have you done something special lately to make a patient's stay here safer or more comfortable? Perhaps you've gone out of your way to help a fellow staffer or make the hospital an even better place to work.

If so, you're eligible for a commendation as Intercommunity's Very Important Employee of the Month.

Intercommunity employees can nominate their fellow workers for the VIE award by submitting a simple written explanation of what the VIE nominee has done to deserve the service award. Applications will be reviewed by a seven-member employee committee which will select the monthly winner. Only supervisory staff are not eligible for the award.

The honored VIE will receive a certificate of recognition from the committee and the administrator, and a dinner for two at The Remark, Voici, The Nut Tree or another area restaurant. A letter of commendation

will be placed in the employee's file, and his or her name and picture will appear in the *House Call*.

Starting in 1978, a Very Important Employee of the year will be selected from the monthly winners to receive a \$100 bonus, a certificate of appreciation and recognition in the *House Call* and local newspapers.

Applications for the September VIE award will be available in the employee lunch room.

"So many good people in this hospital will go the extra mile to provide service to patients and make the hospital a great place to work," said Administrator John Thompson. "It's time we had a way to really 'thank you', we notice all the special care and dedication you're giving."

Although hospital administration will provide the awards, the selection of the VIE will be completely up to the employees who make the nominations and who judge the nominations.

Are You Happy?

A Pleasant Response

In the July *House Call* we discussed Intercommunity's new patient questionnaire and asked, "Dear Patient, are you happy?"

This month we have the answer. "Yes," in most cases.

The strongest negative response came from a patient who objected to the noise, a problem the hospital is confronting with a new quiet campaign. Read about that in another portion of the newsletter.

As for the rest of the comments, we ask you to judge for yourself:

"You have succeeded in serving the human side of the people you serve. My son was here for a small surgery and I greatly appreciate your response to him and myself."

"I've been in the old hospital and this is great. The staff seems to care

more here than in the old place."

"Beds are too hard. I had a pretty nurse this morning."

"This place is great, the staff was wonderful. Feel the care was really great."

"Seems as though the meat was cooked dry."

"The staff seemed to be less rushed and have the time to care about people."

"Too damn noisy. This is a lovely place but it is impossible to get to sleep when visitors are here too long."

"This is the third different hospital I've been in while giving birth and without a doubt this was the nicest staff I've ever seen. They are all extremely courteous and helpful. I am leaving with very good feelings about this hospital. Thank you."

The Problem Man

The man with the heavy new job of hearing patients' complaints has a more pleasant side to his chore.

"I get to hear the many positive things the public has to say, as well," says Assistant Administrator Terry Pitts.

"In fact, I think of the whole thing as taking public comments, rather than just complaints."

When a complaint does surface, however, it usually arrives on Pitts' desk. He routes a copy of the material to the medical committee involved and or to the supervisor of the service.

Many of the complaints can be ironed out in a phone call or meeting with the patient, but when that is not possible, the appropriate medical staff committee will be asked to resolve the issue. In that case, the complaining party will be informed by letter of the committee's resolution of the problem.

COSTS The Why Of The Budget Pie



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES stand ready to serve at a rate of 3.3 per patient in 1977. Intercommunity staff include (from left) Lorine Young, Barbara Bott, Pearl Young, Sharon Sloulin, Terry Pitts, Jerry Berry, Nick Antuna, Jane Lighty, Dr. Richard Lucas, Bernice Findley, Liz Turner, Ann Anderson and Ruby Mathias. (Photo by Rus Stolling)

In this and upcoming issues of the *House Call* we will explore the controversial issues of rising hospital costs. Caught as we are, in a storm of public controversy, it is important that hospital employees and the public know as much as possible about the factors that contribute to those cost increases.

The payroll is a major budgetary expenditure in almost any business. In the hospital setting, though, employee salaries and benefits consume a lion's share of the budgetary pie simply because of the nature of the lion and the pie.

For example, hospitals must staff around the clock in some departments, and more than eight hours daily in many. Instead of putting people behind desks, cash registers, adding machines or mops for 40 hours a week, hospitals must staff a 168-hour week.

And hospital workers are being

paid at a much higher rate now than in 1965, or even in 1975, as administrators attempt to keep abreast of nation-wide inflation. Intercommunity Controller Jim Styles reports that the biggest single item in the \$7.1 million hospital expense budget is \$4 million that goes to salaries and benefits for 315 employees. Intercommunity employees received a 6.5 percent cost-of-living increase in June. Many staffer's paychecks received an additional boost as the Board of Directors realigned salary scales to better compete with those of other area hospitals and businesses.

Not only are hospital employees being paid more, but an increasing number are required today to care for the patient. In 1952 the average number of employees per patient was 1.8. Today the hospital has 3.3 employees per patient.

A second demanding factor is special

training for staff. In industry one in seven has specialized technical knowledge. In hospitals that figure jumps to one in three.

In industry when a company buys a shiny new hunk of technology, that configuration of fuses, wires, resistors and dials replaces people. In the hospital the technological life-saving wonders require people -- more people who are highly skilled and highly trained to operate them.

The result: We pay and the consumer pays for the technology and training to diagnose, treat and save lives. The question is "Do we want to consider the alternative?"

In upcoming issues of *House Call* we will look at other major factors of hospital costs: malpractice insurance, the energy crunch, consumer demands, an aging population and more about the two faces of modern medical technology.

Shhh Please, Patient Resting

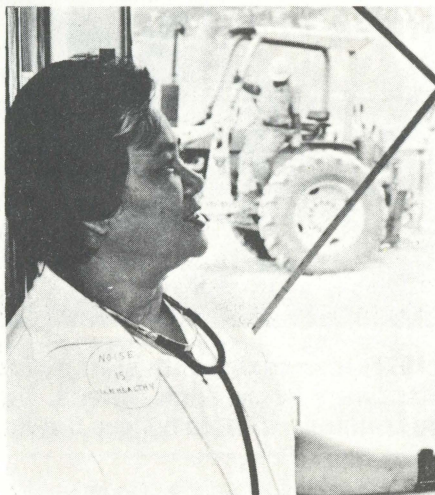
Patients, visitors and hospital staff are being asked to make a "quiet contribution" to Intercommunity's anti-noise campaign.

Don't give dollars, though. Give whispers and rubber soled shoes and give a quieting turn to the television volume knob.

The campaign is in response to both patient and employee needs and takes a two-pronged approach to the problem of noise.

The first is to cut down on as much noise as possible by carpeting the hallways and installing acoustical ceiling tile in patient care areas and by limiting visiting hours.

Visitors will be asked to bring only children of the patient and to leave patient areas at 9 p.m.



MARIA SALAS

The second is to sensitize everyone in the hospital to the problem of excess noise and the need for quiet in a healing environment.

Hospital staff will wear message buttons with "quiet reminders" on them. A sign in patient rooms will ask patients to contribute to a peaceful stay for others by observing three courtesies: Keep the door closed while entertaining guests in patient rooms. Remind young guests to walk and speak quietly. Use the pillow speaker for the television to reduce the volume and avoid bothering other patients.

Visitors will be reminded to make their "quiet contribution" by speaking and walking quietly in patient areas, limiting the number of visitors to two at a time, and by asking that children not related to the patient remain in the lobby area.



The Greening Of Intercommunity

Look around. The scene at Intercommunity is changing from moment to moment. Here is an update of grounds and plant projects.

- By now the \$113,000 paving project incorporating Dana Drive and the hospital parking areas should be complete or almost completed.

- Look up and down for sound-resistant materials in patient area corridors. Acoustical ceiling tile and carpeting are planned.

- Attractive redwood signs grace the Pennsylvania Avenue and Fairfield Avenue entrances to Intercommunity.

- Plans to turn the old hospital into a Medical Office Building are underway, and the building is being cleaned out for the refurbishing effort.

- Plans to put 28 desperately needed medical/surgical beds into the Annex are awaiting the outcome of the state's lengthy Certificate of Need process.

- A third operating room will be equipped as soon as Fairfield Hospital releases the equipment tagged for donation to Intercommunity.

- Greenery is on the way now that the hospital's landscaping plans have been approved.

- Employees can look forward to the installation of picnic tables and benches once the grass and trees are in place behind the hospital. Once a cafeteria is constructed, that area will be converted into outdoor play space for children.

'Thanks' To Fund Drive Contributors

To the many generous gifts and bequests from friends and supporters of Intercommunity Hospital we say, "Thank you."

These contributions make possible improvements in health care services through better hospital facilities. Gifts give the assurance that the best health care will always be available at Intercommunity Hospital.

Contributions may be made by addressing them to the Fund Drive Office of the Hospital, or by calling 429-3600 ext. 585.

MEMORIALS

FOR JOE G. COELHO

Mary Saiz

FOR REED HARRIS

All World Travel Ltd.

Dr. William Olson

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bayley

FOR VIOLA LOCKEFER

Albert and Carol Guyan

FOR DR. I. M. SHANKNAN

Woodard Chevrolet Co.

FOR HANNA K. OLSON

Mr. and Mrs. William C. Robbins

Mr. and Mrs. William Orr

FOR HAROLD ANDERSON

Mr. and Mrs. Earl H. Redman

FOR MRS. JESSIE J. WSHOFFER

William M. Dally

FOR CHARLES A. BROUSE

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brouse

FOR ETTA TRUMBLE

Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Winkler

FOR MR. ALFRED GUYAN SR.

Lea Cole

Dodie Brouse

Dora Evans

Jim Styles

Vivian Leicht

Berte A. Goodman

FOR NOBLE MANSELL

Mr. and Mrs. Nick Sharatz

FOR DR. CARLTON C. PURVANCE

Mr. and Mrs. LaVar Larson

FOR JEAN FRENCH

Mr. and Mrs. William Orr

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Vaughn

GENERAL CONTRIBUTORS

Joan F. Schubert

Field Research Corp.

Sumi Okahara

Directors' Spotlight

MARTHA ORR RAISES FUNDS AND SPIRITS

Intercommunity Hospital is lucky that Board of Directors Secretary Martha Orr has such a strong identity as a volunteer.

The three-term board member spends half the work week over-seeing the hospital's fund drive and still finds time to volunteer additional hours as a Guild Pink Lady helping patients.

Between those two jobs she frequently troubleshoots, runs errands and makes herself available for chores from mailing the *House Call* to individually signing the 125,000 bonds of the 1975 issue. While the new Intercommunity Hospital was under construction Mrs. Orr conducted dozens of guided tours of the unfinished facility, her brown hair covered by a hardhat that was a Valentines Day present from her husband.

Despite her years of work with the hospital, Mrs. Orr hardly expected to be invited to join its Board of Directors.

"Then I Said I'd Be Honored"

"I was out playing golf at Green Valley one day and Rudy Werner (another board member) was on the next fairway," she said. "He walked over to me and he said 'Do you want to run for the Board of Directors,' she relates in a voice still registering shock from the incident.

"I nearly dropped dead right there," she related. "Then I said I'd be honored."

As the only woman member of the board for the eight years she has served there, she perceives her point of view as a very different one from that of the male members.

"I've worked in the hospital as a Guild member. I think I often know more about the sensitive spots in the hospital. I've seen things actually work or not work." Her experience doing the nitty-gritty fund drive task has paid off in recent months as she works with consultants in setting up a development program for the hospital.

Always concerned with the needs of the ever pressing Building Fund, she says she's pleased to find employees beginning to think of entertaining ways to raise money for the hospital. Examples are the trip to Reno that



MARTHA ORR

Housekeeping Department staff sponsored, the up-coming raffle in which Dietary staff will offer gourmet meals

She Defines Herself As Volunteer

for prizes and the planned Follies.

But Intercommunity Hospital is not the only party to benefit from Martha Orr's imagination, good will and energy. Her family is another. She and her husband Bill, Director of Planning for Basic Vegetable Products Inc., live in Vacaville where they have raised three children: Linda, 32, Nancy, 30, and Peter, 26.

The Mother's March benefited from Mrs. Orr's leadership four years in a row. Then there was the Community Chest, the PTA and precinct work for local political candidates. She is a charter member of Intercommunity's volunteer Guild and served as its ninth president. She has put in almost 3,000 hours in the hospital for the Guild

Know Your Benefits

Insurance Plan Is Revised

Intercommunity employees are automatically being reinsured under a new, more effective health insurance and more extensive life insurance this month, reports Jan Larsen, personnel supervisor.

The basic life insurance policy paid for by the hospital for all employees has been increased from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Accidental death and dismemberment benefits jumped from \$4,000 to \$10,000. A supplementary plan is available for supervisors who wish to pay for additional coverage determined by their annual incomes.

Under a new self-funding plan, health benefits to employees will remain the same, as will deductibles, conversion privileges and eligibility. Staff will continue to have free choice of physician and hospital as under the discontinued plan.

SAFECO Life Insurance Company, a major company in the industry, will provide the new coverage. In the self-funding plan the money Intercommunity pays in goes into an individual account and may be used to provide increased benefits in the future if claims against the fund are not excessive.

New employees will continue to be eligible for the plan on the first of the month following 90 days of employment.

Employees who already have health coverage may now add or delete dependants. As with the old plan, dependants must be enrolled within 30 days of their eligibility, or in this case, prior to September 30. After that time, they must complete evidence of insurability and will be included only after approval.

Although the cost of employee benefits are paid by the hospital, dependant coverage is paid for by the employee as the same rate as in the past. That is \$16.54 per pay period for one dependant and \$21.79 per pay period for two or more dependants.

alone.

Martha Orr defines herself as "Volunteer." "It sounds like from the moment we moved here in 1945 I was looking for a way to get out of the house," she laughed.

At Intercommunity, we're lucky she looked our way.

'Thanks to You' United Way Really Means It

When the frightened young mother with a broken arm and black eye limped into the Solano County Center for Battered Woman, the United Way was there to help her.

And when a stranded grandfather showed up on the door step of the Fairfield Salvation Army Extension Service without a penny in his pockets to get him back to the VA home in Yountville, United Way was there too.

United Way will be at Intercommunity Hospital in October and September, looking for financial support from hospital staff members. That support will go to agencies like these and almost 40 others locally.

The Napa-Solano United Way helps fund local Boy Scout and Fire Girl troops, Suicide Prevention and American Red Cross. Contributions go to agencies which provide marriage and family counseling, dispense educational material about drug abuse and venereal disease, fight mental illness and provide recreation and counseling for youngsters.

"When we say 'Thanks to you it works for all of us,' we really mean it", says Bill Carter, assistant director of the Napa-Solano United Way.

Carter will meet with Intercommunity employees this month to talk about the United Way appeal and request employee participation in the 1977 campaign.

"What we want is informed people, giving voluntarily and feeling good about it," Carter said. United Way hopes to raise \$600,000 in this two-county area this year.

New Finance Director Has A Penchant For People

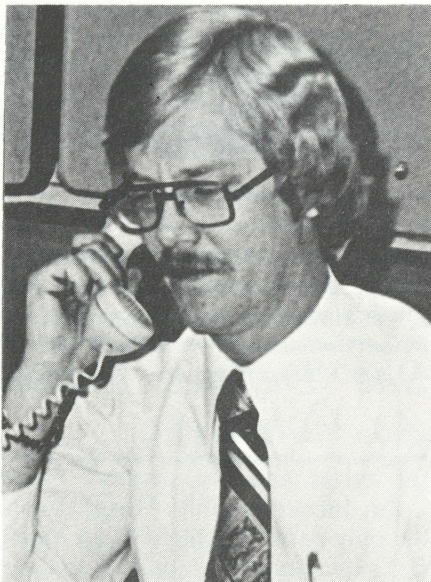
Intercommunity's new Director of Finance, Don Elrod, is just starting to work toward his doctorate in business administration. Odds are 99 to 1 that the dynamic, self-starting numbers man will make it through the difficult program.

Elrod brings a strong sense of direction, a fastidious nature and a dry sense of humor to his new job where he will be the hospital's financial planner.

The hospital's dynamic growth and the opportunity to help plan a total medical facility attracted him to Intercommunity Hospital, Elrod said. He will also be primarily responsible for the hospital's budget, investments and cash flow.

Elrod holds a masters degree in business administration from Golden Gate University in San Francisco, where he is working on his doctorate. He received his Certificate in Health Care Financial Management from the University of Colorado at Denver in 1977.

Elrod formerly served as fiscal administrator with National Medical Enterprises, a Los Angeles-based proprietary chain that owns and operates about 40 hospitals. He was previously controller of that company's 229-bed acute care Garfield Hospital in Monterey Park.



DON ELROD

The new financial director is listed in the 1977-78 Who's Who in the West. He is a candidate for the Dean Kelley Award for the highest grade point average of the graduating business administration masters class.

He holds membership in the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the California State Society of CPA's, the Hospital Financial Management Assn., the National

The 50 Cent Steak Returns

Originator Gets One Free Meal



LIZ TURNER

What this hospital needs is a good 50 cent filet mignon -- and here it comes.

Intercommunity staff will be able to buy 50 cent tickets giving them a chance at four executive lunches, according to Dietitian Sherrie Spann. While the four winners sit down to share the spoils of their victory, the funds from the project will go to Intercommunity's Building Fund.

The fund raising activity was suggested by Housekeeping staffer Liz Turner, who will be an honorary guest at the first winners' luncheon.

Whether or not the raffle will be an ongoing project will depend on everyone's enthusiasm and willingness to pop 50 cents for the lunch of a lifetime, says Martha Orr, secretary of the hospital's Board of Directors.

Watch the employees bulletin board for details of the luscious luncheon raffle.

Assn. of Accountants, and is a student member of the American College of Hospital Administrators.

Despite his comfort in dealing with figures, Elrod says, his real penchant is for people. "When I've been submerged in a pile of numbers all day long, I can't think of a better release than interchange with people. The hospital is a great place for that too."

New Radiologist A Familiar Face

Dr. Richard Hill, Intercommunity's newest Radiology Department physician, is no stranger to many of the hospital's staff.

Before taking his new job here in August he served five years as Radiology Department chief at David Grant Hospital, Travis AFB and taught neural radiology as an assistant professor at U.C. Davis.

The doctor graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1958 and took his internship at Broadlawns Polk County Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa.

For four years Dr. Hill was in general practice in the U.S. Air Force, then completed a three-year residency in Radiology at the University of North Carolina. He taught at Wilford Hall at Lackland AFB, spent a year in Vietnam and a year at March AFB before coming to Travis.

He enjoys boating and waterskiing and an occasional game of racketball. Dr. Hill, his wife, Cassie, and son, David, 18, reside in Vacaville.

Introducing...

Intercommunity staff is welcoming 22 new employees to its ranks. They are as follows:

Vivian Jester, RN in the Critical Care Unit.

Pearl Young, RN at Unit 100.

Carol Duke, RN at Unit 200.

Penny Horst, an on-call nurses aide.

Mary May, Maxine Ellis and Joy Beamer, all on-call RN's.

Colleen Woodruff, RN in the Maternity Ward.

Louise Andrews, unit clerk typist in Surgery.

Louis Wall, laboratory technician.

Teddy-June Bredeson, Lab assistant.

Pamela Prag, Lab assistant.

Bonnie Smith, an on-call kitchen worker.

Eula Mitchell, on-call kitchen worker.

Morgan Hall II, a bio-medical technician in Maintenance.

Ronda Gerwin, Maintenance clerk typist.

Carmen Foster, PBX operator.

Linda Housam, Business Office clerk.

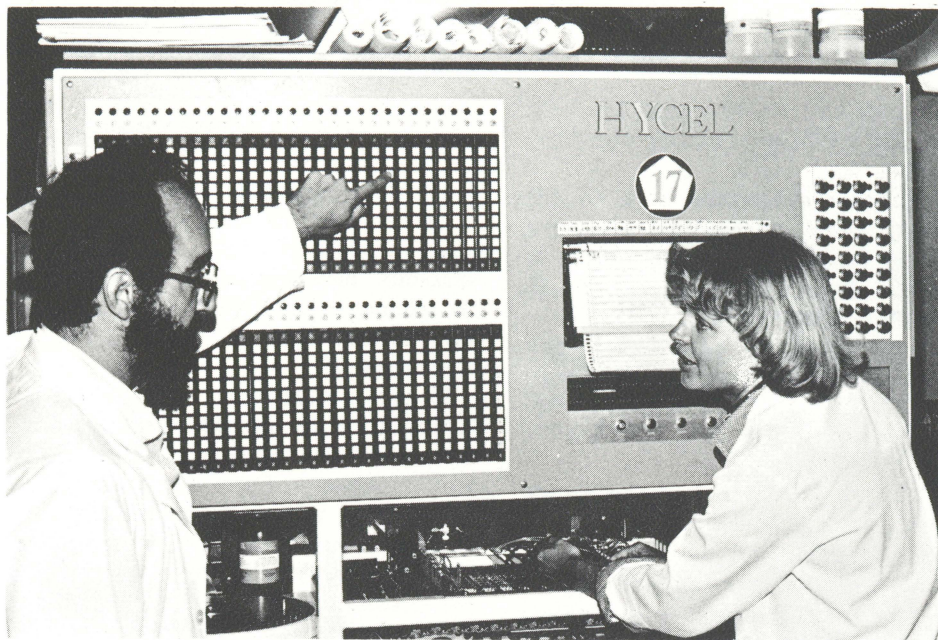
Nancy Jo Tubbs, communications specialist.

Marie Palma, a RN in Unit 100.

Laura Diamondstone, a RN in Unit 100.

Elma Sauserman, Central Supply technician.

Hycel 17 Saves Time — And You Save Blood



THE PEOPLE who work with the Hycel 17 are Nick Simone and Sharon Sloulin

Intercommunity's new Hycel 17 looks and acts like kin to Star Wars' R2D2 and 3PO.

The complex laboratory instrument is perhaps a little short on personality in comparison to its movie counterparts, but it compensates with efficiency.

Hycel 17 does laboratory tests at the rate of 850 per hour. It can be programed to conduct 1,000 at one time. A tiny sample of blood or urine from one patient will allow the Hycel 17 to give the lab technologist the results of 17 tests in exactly 25½ minutes.

"It's fantastic," says the Hycel's "human", Lab Technologist Nick Simone, assistant to Lab Chief John Samples.

With an increasing work load, the laboratory staff is now conducting about 8,000 procedures a month, Samples said.

Those procedures take a fraction of the time on the Hycel, says Simone.

What once took two technicians eight hours each to accomplish, can be done by Hycel 17 in less than half a day.

Although the instrument could technically run 24 hours a day, the lab will use it only six days a week, eight hours each for the time being, Simone said.

The instrument proves it's worth, not only by saving time, but by reducing the amount of glassware needed in the lab. Test tubes are a permanent part of the instrument's innards, and glassware breakage used to be a permanent part of the hospital's overhead.

The savings that the patient is most likely to notice first, though, is that of his own blood. The instrument requires about one-fifth of that previously needed to perform the required tests, Simone said. Instead of drawing three test tubes of blood from one patient, the lab assistant only takes one. Now that's conservation!

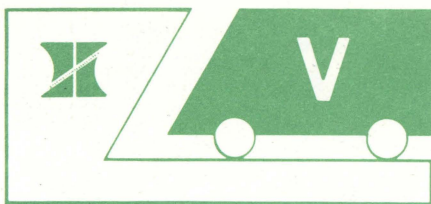
IH Staff Knows How to Play, Too

A record 200-plus employees and guests played softball, munched hot dogs, hamburgers and potato salad and enjoyed the hot August sun at Intercommunity's picnic last week.

Our thanks go to organizer Pat Elmore who says "Our reward was the turnout."

Hurray for her captains too: Ma-

deline and Harry Egolf who held the cooking party; Mary Saiz who organized the games; chief cooks Dottie and "Tuck" Tucker and Judee Blood; Jack Mossman who single-handedly sold 80 tickets; Erma Bradley, Paula McDowell, Gail and "Mitch" Mitchell, Sandra and Don Finkes and Patsy Dagenet.



(Continued from Page 1)

wait until the driver could be freed from the wreckage -- and he was freed too late.

Perhaps the toughest task of the training came at the end when the trainees faced doctors and nurses at the oral board. Only 21 of the 36 students graduated.

Once trained, the paramedics work under radio-supervision by Emergency Department physicians and may administer drugs, give IV's, read EKG's and defibrillate patients.

"We are the eyes and the hands of the doctor," said Gantt. The paramedic treatment not only saves lives, but may mean that the patient requires less time in the hospital to recuperate because less damage was done to the system before help was administered, he said.

The paramedics are only four minutes away from any Vacaville residence, according to Fire Chief Howard Wood, whose support helped bring the life-saving program into being. "Because the Fire Department has the city's emergency ambulance service, it was only natural for it to take the next step to paramedic capability," Chief Wood said.

Last year Vacaville's citizenry voted to sustain a 12-cent tax increase to fund the popular program. Former Mayor Bill Carroll helped lead the campaign for the tax increase and Vacaville firemen got out to sell the

I.H. Staff Ready Too

To Intercommunity's Emergency Department staff getting ready for Vacaville's paramedic program has meant classroom study, homework and learning how to use a complex electronic communications system.

Five physicians and 11 full, part-time and on-call nurses will staff the spacious new emergency area with its telemetry equipment according to Ila Mineer, Emergency Department supervisor.

Nursing staff members hold an Advanced Life Support Certification from the National Heart Association and Coronary Care Certifications. In addition they have completed the 40-hour course in mobile intensive care necessary for them to work with paramedics.

Mrs. Mineer, chief Emergency physician Dr. Bruce Baldwin and Assistant Administrator Terry Pitts have served on subcommittees of the Solano County Emergency Medical Care Committee to help bring the program into being.

The hospital has also contributed to the cost of the program, by leasing the in-hospital telemetry equipment from Solano County.

idea to community groups. It passed with 68 percent of the vote.

Since their return, paramedics Gantt and Norman are even more convinced that the new program is a needed one. Gantt estimated that about half of the ambulance runs he has staffed needed a paramedic on board.

Emergency Census To Hit 2,000 Mark

When an emergency patient came into Intercommunity Hospital six years ago a staffer would telephone the doctor who lived up the street to come to the hospital. Emergency staff seldom saw more than 380 cases a month.

Since then the number of patients seen by emergency physicians has skyrocketed. Almost 2,000 broken fingers, head injuries, heart attacks and other injuries and illnesses are treated monthly by Emergency Department physicians now.

Instead of one on-call doctor, the department staffs five physicians who work on rotating shifts. These doctors, headed by Dr. Bruce Baldwin, are specially trained in emergency medicine.



The doctors anticipate an increasing Emergency Department census as patient figures continue to climb. The number seen monthly has jumped from 1,200 in January this year to 1,875 in July. The July figure has increased from 1,472 in 1976 and from 1,079 the year prior.

"All those expectant mothers and fathers out there should feel more comfortable too, knowing that there's someone available 24 hours a day and minutes away to deliver their baby," Chief Wood said.



**intercommunity
hospital**
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House Call

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